1: Hocart Y-5 (ca. 1920) 1929 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Lakemba

In presenting a feast sometimes the custom of Moala and the West is now followed, the procedure exactly as in other offerings (p. 63). But the Lauan custom is to put it down and say, "It is a small feast," and so on, to which the others answer:

"It is enough; thanks for the trouble."/Following is a description of a small feast presented in this manner to the District Chief of Kambara, Tui Namuka, and myself by the people of Oneata:

When the puddings were finished they were wrapped into parcels. What was left over was eaten by the cooks. The feast was put into baskets and brought to the house where we lodged. As the bearers came up they said, *"O, oa!"* set down the baskets before the door, and squatted down outside.

Our herald moved up towards the door and turning to us said, "I will call out the feast for you, sirs" (*Au ṣa vakamangiti saka yani*), then clapping three times, he sang out, *"A, mangiti,"* dwelling long on the last syllable but one.

Then all clapped and said, *"Amunduo,"* clapped again and said, *"Amunduo,"* then clapped three times.

Our party then replied, "Thanks for the love and the trouble."

The Oneatans said, "Be gracious, the land is famished; there is nothing to be found; as much as we have found we have warmed up." Then they got up and departed. Those who attended on us divided it according to the directions of the herald; one man counted the food, reckoned out the shares, and ranged the baskets; this is called *watu lau*, to stand and count. When all was ready the herald said to him, "Touch it for us" (*tambaka mai*); whereupon he touched each share, calling out, "For London. For Kambara. For the Namuka cutter."

At great feasts in which the whole of Lakemba takes part, besides the herald are officials called Tui Ra (Lords of Below); in other parts they are called Tui Rara (Lords of the Green). There are two in Natokalau, Tui Ra of Yandrana and Tui Ra of Vakano; one in Navuaira, Tui Ra of Waitambu, the herald being the second. The duties of the Lords of the Green and of the herald tend to go together; they refer matters to one another. Lords of the Green are they who assign contributions (*a i lesilesi ni mangiti*), and decide the amount of the feast; they vie with one another in quantity, and the chiefs of Tumbou hearken to them. The Lord of the Green of Waitambu fixes the amount for Navuaira; and the Lord of the Green of Yandrana, for Natokalau. They sit at the lower end of the house, discuss the quantity and inform the chief. If they decide it will be one thousand from each clan it is difficult for the chief to alter it. They also divide the feast.

If the Lord of the Green of Yandrana is absent, the Lord of the Green of Vakano fixes the amount. If it is a state affair (*ka vaka vanua*), if a sovereign state (*matanitu*) comes, such as Thakaundrove or Mbau, and they make a very big feast, two Lords of the Green only are called, from Waitambu for Navuaira, from Yandrana for Natokalau. The Lord of the Green of Vakano decides things in his own village; he is Lord of the Green to Nasangalau, and if Tumbou proper are assembled as kinsmen, and the High Chief is not there, the Lord of the Green of Vakano may speak: he is Lord of the Green to Tui Tumbou. The people of Yandrana claim that their Lord of the Green takes precedence of all the Lords of the Green in

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Lakemba; and the Lord of the Green of Waitambu will not sit at the head in a gathering of all Lakemba, but is only Lord of the Green when it is an assembly of Navuaira only.

The feast is usually collected together from the various villages and clans outside the house of some nobleman, at the present day the District Chief. The notabilities of Tumbou, Tuimereke, Malani, Tui Tumbou, and the rest, together with the village headmen assemble in the house and drink kava. It is the duty of the Lord of the Green of Waitambu to sit by the food and drive away the dogs; formerly he took a big piece for himself, but now the people object. When the feast is complete the quantities are counted. Then the feast is taken over to Great House and heaped up; and either Lord of the Green sitting beside the heap will proclaim the quantities, "The feast, sir, is ready. One hundred coconuts; three hundred taro; forty packets of pudding; thirty large parcels of fish, and that is all" (*ka oooti le*). As usual the last syllable but one in every sentence is long drawn out.

The chiefs inside the house answer, "Good, good. Live, live."

If it is a death feast (*i mburua*) the High Chief then comes out to hold a Tongan state kava in the open. One share is immediately taken to Great House, including the head half of a pig.[14] The two Lords of the Green divide up the feast while the herald looks on. A Fijian feast is divided according to villages if several villages are present; according to clans, if the feast is confined to the village. In a Lakemban feast Tumbou gets two shares: one for the nobles, which is not proclaimed for that is forbidden, is merely covered with leaves; the other share is proclaimed "Tumbou" and it is for the Land (Thekena and Tanggalevu). The other shares are touched in the same way and the names of the villages or clans called out. The head of the pig goes to Levuka because they are seamen (*kaiwai*). The herald says it formerly went to Tumbou proper. The nobles get the back of the pig.

If the feast is in Tongan style, as death-feasts are, it is divided among individuals, and only those who brought presents (*i yau*) at the death receive a portion. In Tonga a stranger gets nothing. In Fiji he is pitied, and a share is always arranged for any visitor. At King Edward's death feasts no presents, of course, could be brought to the house of mourning, so the feast was divided among all the villages, as many shares to each as it had clans; and also portions were given to guests from Tongatabu, to those from Vavau, and to those from Haapai, to the Headmaster, to the Assistant Master, to the school boys, to the gaolers. The shares brought home are called *yatho ni mangiti*.

It is the duty of Vakano and Waitambu to sweep away the rubbish.

[14] I am not quite certain whether this procedure comes in here or after the feast has been collected outside the District Chief's house. I think the above is right.

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The procedure is simple on less formal occasions, such as marriage or death feasts for individuals in the village. The kava is prepared either by young men or by girls. Sometimes the kava maker and the cup bearer are girls and the kava chewers are men. In olden days kava was prepared and drunk by men only. Today it is occasionally drunk by women in southern Lau. The assistants at the bowl are frequently absent. Occasionally the bowl has several legs or no legs at all. It is not raised for inspection by the herald before water is added, the hands are not examined, and the mixture is tested, after being strained, by being poured into the bowl from a raised cup. The tabus pertaining to the straining process are not observed, and the drinking order is not fixed, nor is it called by the herald. The men in the kava circle usually smoke between rounds. To light his cigarette, which is leaf tobacco rolled in a dried banana leaf (*suluka*), each has placed before him a burning brand.

Occasionally a few individuals hold a kava party in the very early morning called *pongipongi*. Lauans say this is a Tongan custom.

FEASTS

Every important ceremony is marked by a feast, which is presented by one group to another, divided into shares, and distributed according to rank to both recipients and donors. Feasts vary in size and quality of food according to the rank of the recipients and the resources of the donors. Food for most feasts differs from that of the daily meal only in the larger quantity for each individual and in the addition of a sweet pudding for each. Communal fishing which provides fish for the feast usually yields more and larger fish than are caught daily by the women. Turtle and pig are great delicacies served only at important feasts for high ranking persons. Turtle is considered the most chiefly food.

In Lau important feasts are steamed in the earth oven (pl. 2, *A*) by men, while small feasts, eaten in the morning, are boiled by women. In contrast to the daily use of the earth oven in Lau (p. 153) it is used only for feasts in the interior of Viti Levu.

The cooked food for a large feast is placed on the village ceremonial ground or outside the house of the recipient and is presented according to the usual ceremony (pp. 65-66) by one of the donors. A small feast is divided outside the house of the donor. Coconut leaves are spread on the ground and the food from the oven is piled upon them. Freshly plaited coconut-leaf baskets, one for each household, are arranged in a circle around the food. The food is shared according to households and distributed by the host. At a large feast the food is distributed according to clans under the direction of the chief of crops or the chief of the ceremonial ground. True food (*kana vitchina*), namely garden produce, is distributed first, then puddings, fish, turtle,

2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
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or pig. Pots of boiled food, covered with slightly dry breadfruit leaves, fastened down by tying a piece of pandanus around the rim, are brought by the women from the kitchens into the circle. The boiled food is either wrapped in leaves and put into baskets with the steamed food by the men, or is left in pots to be distributed with the baskets. The rank and size of the household and its relationship to the host determine the quantity and quality of its share.

The food in the baskets is covered with leaves (hibiscus, banana, breadfruit, ti). The shares are then delivered to each household by young men related to the host. The food is distributed to the members of the household and eaten quickly and informally. Sweet puddings are eaten first, then the main part of the feast. Guests from other villages often carry their food home and eat it in their own village. Shares for visiting guests with canoes are delivered to the canoes. Frequently the shares for close relatives in nearby villages are set aside and delivered.

The chief or person of highest rank always receives the first and best share of a feast. Cooked food presented to the chief or other high persons is covered with green leaves as a sign of respect. Large fish and turtles are wrapped in breadfruit, banana, or ti leaves and steamed in the oven. The head is preferred because it contains the mana and is therefore served to the person of highest rank. Formerly the head of the turtle or pig was eaten by the chief only. Now, in accordance with the Tongan custom (Gifford, 9, p. 125), the back is eaten instead and the priest receives the head.

Ceremonial Exchanges

Large competitive ceremonial exchanges (*solevu*) are made according to a definite ceremonial pattern based on the *sevusevu* rites which were formerly used to make offerings to the ancestor gods but are now used to present first fruits to the chief (pp. 65-66).

On Kambara a *solevu* with deferred payment is occasionally held between the rival villages, Tokalau and Nggalinggali, and between Undu and Lomatchi. Each village tries to outdo the other in quantity of food presented. Several months or years may elapse between the initial payment and the return payment.

The following description of a competitive exchange with immediate payment, held in January 1934, between Komo and Muanaithake was obtained on Fulanga.

The exchange was initiated by the Komo people who sent a message to Muanaithake by a visiting Muanaithake man, asking that a *solevu* be held. The Komo people stated that they wished wooden bowls, a small canoe, paddles, chickens, mats, and pandanus, and that they would bring manioc. A village meeting was held in Muanaithake and the proposal was accepted. Work began on the articles, and four months later a group of Muanaithake men went to Komo on the Fulanga cutter. The Komo people gave a feast called *mangitchi ni veikandavi*. The Muanaithake helped the Komo people cut manioc in